

## **REMARKS**

The above amendment and these remarks are responsive to the non-final Office Action of Examiner James S. McClellan, dated 20 Oct 2004.

Claims 1, 4, 8, and 9 are in the case, none as yet allowed.

### **35 U.S.C. 103**

Claims 1-11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Thompson U.S. Patent 6,668,253 in view of Johnson U.S. Patent 6,055,516

Thompson is related to data cleansing for reporting in a data warehouse, and do not teach Applicants' claims, which are all directed to the synchronization of ledger accounts between a back-end procurement system and a front-end requisition system, and doing this on behalf of a large number of customer companies.

The Examiner refers to Thompson at column 1, lines 48-

51, for teaching "maintaining synchronization of ledger accounts between various systems comprising the steps of: associating a plurality of companies within a company group...." This is what Thompson says:

"Providing the ability for customizable, consolidated financial, operating and inventory reporting from multiple sources will allow the enterprise and store managers to achieve increased bottom-line gains by out performing existing manual data extraction and manipulation process..."

"The consolidation process starts with extracting data from the operational systems. The data is then combined to provide an overall view of the conditions and performance of the enterprise. The process of combining the data requires that a common chart of accounts is developed for financials, accounts are summarized and adjustments are made. For other data, mapping occurs to get a consistent view of the data. Adjustments are made for inter-company transactions, foreign currency conversions, deferred taxes, goodwill, etc." (Col. 1, lines 27-54.)

It is apparent that Thompson relates to a collection of entities (stores) within a common enterprise. Thompson teaches providing consolidated financial reports for an enterprise including a plurality of such entities. All of these entities are of the same enterprise (in applicants language, of the same company group). Thus, there is no association of the companies in a plurality of company groups by a central enterprise providing procurement

services to a plurality of such companies, with common chart of accounts for companies within a company group that varies with respect to the chart of accounts for other company groups.

Johnson relates to a requisition and catalog system for a single enterprise, and does not address the problems of maintaining such a system for a plurality of customer companies associated in company groups having different charts of accounts.

Therefore, applicants assert, there is no basis for combining the requisition and catalog system of Johnson with the consolidate financial reporting system of Thompson in the manner set forth in applicants claims.

Applicants have brought out these distinctions with respect to Johnson and Thompson in each of the claims.

#### **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Applicants urge that the above amendments be entered and the case passed to issue with claims 1-11.

The Application is believed to be in condition for

allowance and such action by the Examiner is urged. Should differences remain, however, which do not place one/more of the remaining claims in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to phone the undersigned at the number provided below for the purpose of providing constructive assistance and suggestions in accordance with M.P.E.P. Sections 707.02(j) and 707.03 in order that allowable claims can be presented, thereby placing the Application in condition for allowance without further proceedings being necessary.

Sincerely,

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